

March 9, 1964

## FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT SUMMARY

F-5-R-13 Central Montana Fisheries Study--Steve E. Swedberg

Job IV. Evaluation of Planting Catchable Sized Rainbow Trout into Waters Containing High Population Densities of Less Desirable Species of Fish

In 1963 Lake Francis, near the town of Valier, Pondera County, Tiber Reservoir in Liberty and Toole Counties and the Marias River below Tiber Dam, primarily in Liberty and Hill Counties, were to be stocked with "graded" six to seven inch rainbow trout. These waters already contained high densities of fish of several different species.

The primary objective was to find out how many of the tagged trout released would be caught by the angler. Also, two other objectives were to be considered. One was to evaluate angler use figures for Tiber Reservoir. Past annual angler use figures put out by the Bureau of Reclamation were considered to be far in excess than those figures estimated by district wardens and fisheries personnel. An additional objective was to see if a fishery could be provided to satisfy the demand expressed by anglers and other interested persons in Chester and other near-by communities.

Plants of tagged and marked fish that were introduced into Lake Francis, Tiber Reservoir and Marias River were: In July 9, 1963 Lake Francis was stocked with 3,060 rainbow trout averaging 10 inches in length, and these trout were tagged with a white plastic jaw tag. In July 8, 10, 12, 1963 the Willow Creek Arm of Tiber Reservoir was planted with 9,636 rainbow trout averaging 10 inches in length, and these trout also marked with a white plastic jaw tag. In July 12, 1963 the Willow Creek Arm of Tiber Reservoir was stocked with 10,000 rainbow trout averaging five inches in length; these fish had their right belly fin clipped off, the left fin was not clipped. In July 12, and 15, 1963 the Marias River below Tiber Dam was planted with 4,640 ten-inch rainbow trout. <sup>1/</sup> The left left belly fin of these trout was clipped off, but the right fin was not.

Plans for the recovery of tagged or marked fish included a statistical sampling plan, ~~thirty~~<sup>twenty</sup> two days of warden assistance and a summer employee. Any additional checks were to be made with gill nets.

We plan to discontinue this project since we feel that the three objectives have been satisfied.

<sup>1/</sup> The loads were split, approximately 3,190 were planted just below the outlet down to the park. The other 1,450 were placed just above the first bridge (Pugsley's) downstream from the dam.